THE LIFE OF THIS WORLD Is a Transient Shade

الدنيا ظل زائل

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Publisher's Note

The All-Mighty Allah has created man and jinn to worship Him. The life of this world is the means to realize this objective and should not be taken otherwise. Nevertheless, many people act as if they were going to be eternal and as if the life of this world is the end in itself.

Of-course, the Muslims are not commanded to absolutely renounce the pleasures of this world, but to seek them within the required legal limits. A good Muslim should always remember that this life is a passage, and that sooner or later he has to leave it because there is death. Therefore, all his deeds must focus on Allah's obedience to ensure a good recompense in the Hereafter for himself.

Allah warrants man's sustenance and commands him to seek His pleasure through worship. Both the right path leading to Allah's pleasure and the wrong one leading to His wrath are stated in the Holy Qur'an and further clarified by the Prophetic hadiths. So if a man in his good senses and by his own volition chooses the transient pleasures of this life rejecting the eternal ones of the Hereafter, then he will regret that on the Day of Resurrection when it will be too late.

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Preface

All praises be to Allah, who made this life a passage and the Hereafter a place of dwelling. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be on the most honorable of the Prophets and Messengers, Muhammad (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam).

The people, nowadays, are pouncing for worldly benefits as if the purpose of their creation were to compete over the worldly materialistic gains and to collect them. They forgot a day when they will return to Allah.

This book is the seventh in the series of "where is our place, compared to these people (the Salaf)?" The title of the book is "The Life of This World is a Transient Shade" in which I present the viewpoint of our ancestors and how they regarded this life. They were certain that life is a passage, a station after which there is going to be a definite departure, then a reckoning and recompense.

This book is a reminder of the return to Allah and a provision for those on the path.

May Allah make our deeds for His sake Alone.

Abdul Malik Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abdul Rahman Al-Qasim.

Introduction

The All-Mighty Allah `The Exalted,' says describing this world: **"...Truly, the life of this world is nothing but a [quick passing] enjoyment, and verily, the Hereafter that is the home that will remain forever.)**" (Qur'an 40:39)

He has also warned mankind of the trial that children and possessions represent, saying: **(And know that your possessions and your children are but a trial and that surely with Allah is a mighty reward.)** (Qur'an 8:28)

The All-Mighty Allah also forbids us to long for what he has bestowed on others:
(And strain not your eyes in longing for the things We have given for enjoyment to various groups of them [polytheists and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah], the splendour of the life of this world, that We may test them thereby...) (Qur'an 20:131)

There are many Qur'anic Verses, which dispraise the life of this world and invite mankind to exploit their efforts for the Hereafter. Allah's Messenger (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) `Blessings and Peace be upon him' said: **"My similitude and that of the life of this world is that of a traveller who took a rest at mid-clay under a shade of a tree and then left it."** (Narrated by Ahmad, At-Tirmidhi Ibn Majah and Al-Haakim)

The Prophet (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) also urged the Muslims to prepare for death and to take provisions for the Hereafter, He said: "Be in this world like a stranger, or a wayfarer." (Narrated by Bukhari)

Whenever we see the people pouncing for worldly legal and illegal benefits, we remember what the Prophet (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) said: **"When the All-Mighty Allah gives a person whatever he loves of the worldly benefits despite**

his disobedience, then that is a gradual enticement." (Narrated by Ahmad and Al-Bayhaqi)

Those who hold on to the false life of the world, yearning for material benefits may be distracted from obedience, worship and performing their religious duties on time and in a perfect manner.

The Prophet (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) said: **“The Hour (of Resurrection) has drawn near, whereas the people have become more greedy for the life of the world and more remote from Allah.”** [Narrated by al-Haakim]

Collecting worldly benefits by legal means and spending them for legal ends is worship that brings a person close to Allah. But collecting them by illegal means or spending them for illegal ends leads only to Hell.

Yahya Ibn Mu'adh (radiyallahu anhu) `May Allah be pleased with him' said: "I don't order you to abandon life but to abandon sins. Abandoning life is a virtue and abandoning sins is a duty, so your need for this latter is greater than your need for the former."

Dear brother/sister,
This life is full of benefits and fortunes: The land on which man constructs his dwelling, and grows his food, drinks, dress ...etc., all represents the nourishment for man's body and soul proceeding towards Allah. Man of-course cannot do without these vital necessities. The one who takes from these necessities only according to his real need as commanded by Allah is saved and praised. But whoever takes more than necessary for himself falls into covetousness which will lead him into harm instead of benefit, and consequently divert him from the right path towards Allah and the Hereafter.

Likewise, taking less than required of the worldly benefits is harmful because the human body needs to satisfy certain basic

needs, and that will increase its capability to worship Allah perfectly.

‘Amr Ibn Abdullah (radiyallahu anhu) said: "The life of this world and the Hereafter, in the heart of a person, are like the two scales of a balance, when the one becomes heavier the other becomes lighter."

Al-Hasan Al-Basra was asked: "Who is going to cry more than the others on the Day of Resurrection?" He answered: "A man on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace and who uses that for Allah's disobedience."

No doubt, the one who uses his money in this life in Allah's obedience: giving charity, contributing to the spread of Islamic knowledge, constructing mosques, is successful in directing this grace of Allah towards the right deeds that will definitely benefit him in the Hereafter.

Man, by nature, loves collecting money, gold and silver, running, for that purpose, here and there from birth to death, but what will he attain? And where is he going to finish?

Life will never continue on one pattern and is always changing, from richness to poverty, and from happiness to sorrow. This is Allah's Way with His Creation, but the people are running after a mirage each for a known number of days and years that will expire.

A poet made an image about the life of this world saying that it is like a dead animal encircled by a number of dogs pulling, its parts each in a direction. If you avoid it, then you are safe, but if you decide to pull a part for yourself, the dogs will be your rivals.

`Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (radiyallahu anhu) said: "Renouncing the worldly pleasures is a comfort for both the human heart and body."

Al-Hasan (radiyallahu anhu) said: "I know some people who do neither feel happy for obtaining any of the worldly pleasures, nor feel sorry for missing any of them."

A believer should not regard the life of this world as a home and a dwelling, but should consider himself as a traveller in it. This is the good understanding and the fruitful knowledge.

Yahya Ibn Mu'adh (radiyallahu anhu) said: "How can't I love this life? A sustenance is decreed for me in it which keeps me alive and helps me to perform the deeds of obedience that will lead me to Paradise." Such are the people who should be happy because of the way they regard life, but not those who live in luxurious palaces, neglect worship and reject every deed of obedience.

`Abdullah Ibn `Umar (radiyallahu anhu) said: "The life of this world is Paradise for a disbeliever and a prison for a believer. When a believer dies and departs from this world, he feels himself like a prisoner who was released to go freely on the spacious earth."

O people! The arrows of death are pointed towards your chests, so keep your eyes on them. The trap of hope is set in front of you, so beware of it. The trials of the life of this world have encircled you, so avoid failure in them. Don't be misled by your good condition because it will vanish.

Whoever thinks well of the outcome of this life, takes the precautions, and whoever is certain about the long way he has to travel, makes the preparation for that.

O people! We have spent a long time in the amusements of this life, and our sins have accumulated on each other.

Dear brother/sister, where is our place in comparison to these people?

Narrated Anas Ibn `Ayyad (radiyallahu anhu): I saw Safwan Ibn Salim, and had it been said to him: "Tomorrow is the Day of Resurrection, he would have not needed to perform an additional act of worship."

How amazing our situation is... This life is leaving us and the Hereafter is coming towards us, but we keep ourselves busy with the one that is leaving and turn away from that which is coming, as if we are not going to arrive and settle therein.

`Umar Ibn Abdul `Aziz said in a sermon: "The life of this world is not your permanent dwelling because Allah has decreed that it should perish and that all its dwellers should leave it. How many a populated area that will soon come to ruins, and how many a happy resident who will soon leave his residence. You should therefore leave this world in the best way you can, and the best of provisions is piety. Since the life of this world is neither a home nor an abode for the believer, he should be in it, either a stranger whose objective is to take the required provisions and return home, or a traveller who is residing nowhere and who is proceeding day and night to reach a country of residence.

The people are wrestling for the worldly pleasures, some loose their religion, others forget their children, hatred becomes common and rancour is sown between them.

A poet said: "Man should take the minimum possible of the worldly pleasures, because he is leaving for a fixed appointment; turn his eyes away from this life and its ornaments, make all the efforts to keep away from its lusts, because it is a place of temporary pleasures and trials, and all the people in it will perish."

To remind us of our destination, Bill Ibn Sa'ad said: "O people! You are not created so as to perish, but you will be shifted from one house to another, as you have been shifted from the back

bone to the mother's womb and from there to life, then to graves, and from graves to Resurrection and in the end to eternity either in Paradise or in Hell."

Al-Hasan said: "Beware of the diversions of this world, which are many. If a man opens a door for diversions, then that door may open ten others."

Ibn As-Sammak said: "Whoever tastes the sweetness of the life in this world for his inclination towards it, will also taste the bitterness of the Hereafter for turning away from it."

Dear brother/sister,
It is important to know that what Allah wills becomes a reality and what he does not will never take place. Be certain that good deeds are a grace from Allah for which you have to thank Him and invoke Him not to interrupt them, and that evil deeds are of his punishment, so you should pray to Him to protect you from them, and not to abandon you to yourself in respect of performing good deeds and avoiding evil ones.
Ibrahim Ibn Ad-ham was asked: "How are you?" He said: "We patch the life of this world by tearing from our religion, so neither our religion remains nor what we patch. Blessed is he who prefers Allah, his Rabb (Lord) and renounces the life of this world for what he expects as reward in the Hereafter."

The signs of the love shown for the life of this world are: Love of its people, favoritism, flattery. Sufyan Ath-Thawri said: "Man's love for the life of this world is shown in the way he greets people."

Look at a chaste poor man... nobody talks to him. People greet him so warily as if fearing that he may pass poverty to them. But see how the people welcome a rich man, even if he does not perform prayer. They stand up with smiling faces, and each one hopes to greet him first. Note the difference between a man who is so great as seen by Allah and another who does not even weigh a mosquito's wing - but this is life.

Abdullah Ibn `Aun said: "Those before us used to consecrate for the life of this world the surplus of their needs for the Hereafter, and you consecrate for the Hereafter the surplus of your needs in the life of this world."

O brother/sister in Islam,
Life is very short, and the richest person therein is poor. You have to wake up from this long sleep and to renounce the love of this life. One day this life will have an end and the Hereafter will come forward. What is once remote will become so close. What you used to see in others, people will see in you, a sudden death - or even in your good health you may be taken from your bed to the grave. These are lessons following one another, but we are heedless and lost in error.

Abu Hazim said: "Whoever knows the life of this world feels neither happiness in prosperity nor sorrow in affliction."

'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (radiyallahu anhu) said: "Whoever has the following six characteristics does all that is required to make him enter Paradise and avoid Hell: to know Allah (M) and obey him, to know Satan and disobey him, to know the truth and follow it, to know falsehood and avoid it, to know the life of this world and renounce it and to know the Hereafter and seek it."

Ibn `Ayyad said: "Coming to this life is so easy whereas departing from it is so difficult. Death is a very critical moment during which the soul is uprooted. But even if leaving the life of this world is easy, earning for material pleasures and worldly benefits cause distraction, concern and restlessness."

Dear brother/sister,
Be of the children of the Hereafter, and not of the children of this world. The child follows the mother, and the life of this world does not deserve moving a foot towards it, so why do you run after it?

Brother/sister,
If the people are satisfied with the life of this world, be satisfied with Allah. If they are happy with the life of this world, be happy with Allah. And if they like the company of heir lovers and friends, you should like the company of Allah. If they seek the friendship of their kings and leaders to obtain honour and prestige, you must seek the Friendship of Allah to obtain the true honour and prestige.

`Umar Ibn Abdul `Aziz said in a sermon: "Every journey requires provisions, so let piety be your provision in the journey from the life in this world to the Hereafter. Be like the one who saw the torment that Allah has prepared for him, in order that you may desire His reward and fear His torment. Let not the term be prolonged for you and your hearts be hardened, then submit to your enemy. The All-Mighty Allah has not extended hope for a man who (in the morning) is not certain to live till evening, and (in the evening) is not certain to live till morning. May be death is waiting for him between the two. The one who can rest assured is the one who is certain that he is saved from Allah's torment and the horrors of the Day of Resurrection. I seek refuge in Allah from commanding you to do what I forbid myself to do lest I may lose my deal on a day when truth only avails."

A poet said: "O you unmindful to death, deceived by vain hopes, you will leave this life within a short time. You desire to join the good people but without taking the required provisions. Don't trust the life of this world and its decorations, because you will not stay here. Now you wait to see what will come tomorrow and after tomorrow, but hope may betray you. Your youth has gone forever, and you are now an old man with neither amusement nor argument. Why do we distract ourselves with the life of this world whereas it is offering the people many pleasures that hide serious diseases in them."

Narrated Muhammad Ibn Abu `Imran: I heard a man asking Hatim Al-Asamm: "On what you have based your dependence

on Allah ()?" He said: "On four points: I knew that my sustenance cannot be eaten by someone else and I am assured, I knew that my duty can-not be done by anyone else, so I kept myself busy with that. I knew that death will come suddenly to me, so I prepared myself for it. I knew that wherever I go I am under Allah's Eye, so I am always shy of Him."

A poet said: "Those who travelled to many places allege that a stranger is always submissive even if he is honoured and respected." I said to them: "If a stranger is a pious person, then wherever he settles himself he will be sublime."

Abdullah Ibn Al-Mubarak said: "O man! Prepare yourself for the Hereafter, obey Allah to the extent of your need for Him and anger Him to the extent of your patience in Hell."

O our Rabb! How far you are from imperfection, we disobey you with our ignorance and you forgive us with Your Mercy.

Al-Fudayl Ibn `Ayyad said about the believer in this world: "His only concern is to prepare as much as he can of the provisions that will benefit him when he returns home. He does neither compete with the people of the country where he is a stranger for prestige nor feels concern about submissiveness in their land."

A poet said: "The life of this world is not lasting and will perish because it is as weak as the spider's web."

Wahib Ibn Al-Ward said: "Don't insult Satan explicitly whereas you take him clandestinely as a friend."

Satan, desires, and human self-inclination to evil join their efforts to turn the Muslim away from his religion by making evil deeds seem fair to him.

Dear brother/sister,

Life in this world is like a racetrack. People are competing: some of them on horseback, others on donkey back and others on foot, but the dust is too heavy to allow a distinction between them. When the dust settles then it becomes clear who is leading the race.

We are proceeding towards death. Every day our life-span decreases and our end comes closer. And we remain unmindful, neither attaching importance nor preparing for the Day of Judgement.

Salamah Ibn Dinar said: "If you are satisfied from the life of this world with what is sufficient for you, then the minimum is sufficient. But if you are not satisfied with what is sufficient, then nothing can satisfy you."

By Allah, owners of great riches and wealth and poor needy people are equal in what they take from this life at their death: only a shroud. But they differ inside the grave which is either a garden from Paradise or a hole in Hell.

Aba Safwan Ar-Ru'winl was asked: "What is that life dispraised by Allah in the Qur'an and that the sensible man should avoid?" He said: "Whatever you love in this life seeking worldly benefits is dispraised, and whatever you love seeking benefits in the Hereafter is praised."

`AII Ibn Abi Talib (radiyallahu anhu) said, describing the life in this world: "Its legal benefits will be subject to reckoning in the Hereafter and the illegal ones will lead to Hell."

The All-Mighty Allah has revealed to Dawud [David (alaihis salam)] `May Peace be upon him,' "O Dawud (alaihis salam)! Every day and night I look to the old man and say to him: "O my slave! You became old, of a weak body and soft bones, and you will soon return to Me, so be shy of Me, verily, I am shy of you."

We race after worldly benefits. - We fear poverty and desire for collecting this life's ruins as if we are going to have an eternal life in it. We fear poverty, but not the reckoning in the Hereafter. We fear hunger, but not Allah's reproach and torment.

Yahya Ibn Mu'adh (radiyallahu anhu), said: "O how poor is man, if he fears Hell in the same degree of his fearing poverty, then he will enter Paradise."

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said about our ancestors: "I swear by Him in whose Hand my life is, I lived among people for whom the life in this world was more contemptible than the earth on which they used to walk."

A poet said: "We dispraise time though it is not guilty, and complain of it but in vain. Time is not to blame, this is what we have committed and we are punished for it. This is Allah's Decree, and we have to be patient and submit to Him."

Dear brother/sister in Islam,
Day and night are stages through which people pass until they come to their last journey. If, at any stage, you can send forward provisions, then do so, because soon the journey will end and the matter is so urgent. Prepare the provisions for your journey, because death may come suddenly.

A man wrote to a brother: "Brother, you think that you are a permanent resident in this life, whereas you are in a continuing journey in which you are driven rapidly. Death is moving towards you, and life is being rolled up behind you. What has gone of your life-span will never return to you."
We proceed in the convoy of those who renounce worldly pleasures and see the caravans of the pious pass by, so how do we see the combination between life in this world and the Hereafter, between renunciation and satisfaction? `Ali Ibn Al-Fudayl said: "I heard my father saying to Ibn Al-Mubarak: You order us to renounce the worldly pleasures and to be satisfied

with the minimum, whereas you are buying goods, so what is that?" He said: "I do that to protect my face and my honour, and this helps me obey my Rabb." My father said: "How good is that if realised."

Dear brother/sister,
How good is the life in this world if its benefits are legally gained and legally spent. There are many ways to spend legally: give charity to orphans and widows, help needy people and rescue injured and sick ones.

Sufyan said: "Beware of Allah's wrath in three matters: neglecting His commands, being unsatisfied with what He has decreed to you as sustenance and being angry with Allah (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) in the event of unfulfilled desire of the worldly benefits."

Livelihoods in this life are distributed by Allah, so you have to accept that without any objection, whether it is in big or small quantity, whether it remains or passes away. You must accept your share of the life of this world as it is decided by Allah, and compare yourself to none of those who are given better than you.

A poet said: "Whoever desires to live observing his religious duties and enjoying worldly pleasures, has to look to those above him as regards piety and to those below him as regards worldly benefits."

But the best advice is what the All-Mighty Allah mentions in the Qur'an: **(And strain not your eyes in longing for the things, We have given for enjoyment to various groups of them [polytheists and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah], the splendour of the life of this world, that We may test them thereby...)** (Qur'an 20: 131)

Ibrahim Al-Ash'ath said: I heard Al-Fudayl saying: "Man's fear of Allah is equal to his knowledge of Him, and his renunciation

of the life of this world is equal to his desire of the Hereafter. Whoever acts according to what he knows, Allah will make him successful in what he doesn't know. And whoever is ill-tempered disgraces his honour, religion and generosity."

And ascetic said: "I know none who has heard of Paradise and Hell, then spends an hour of his life without praying, remembering Allah or doing a good deed." A man said: "I weep so much," He said to him: "To laugh and admit your sins is better than to weep and feel proud of your deeds." The man said: "I need your advice," He said: "Abandon the life of this world to its people as they have abandoned the Hereafter to its people."

Dear brother/sister,
Whoever remembers death demeans this life. Whatever you collect of the treasures of this life you will not enjoy, because there is death which destroys pleasures and disperse the groups.

Abu `Ubaidah An-Naji said: "We visited AI-Hasan AlBasri on the day he died. He said: "You are welcome, may Allah's Peace be upon you, and accommodate us all in the Home of settlement. This is a good sign if you are true and patient. Your share of this religion should not be to heard with your ears and say what you hear from your mouths. May Allah's Mercy be upon him who eats cheap bread, wears rags, sits on the ground, works hard in worship, weeps for his sins, avoids Allah's punishment, and asks His Mercy till death comes to him in this state."

Narrated Abu Kabshah: The Prophet (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) said: "The people in the life of this world are four type men: A man to whom Allah has given money and knowledge, and who ears Allah, visits his relatives and knows Allah's right in that, and this is the best of positions." A man to whom Allah has given knowledge but no money, and who says with a sincere intention: "If I have the money of that man (the first), I will do as he does." With this good intention, his reward will be

equal to the first man. The third man is a man to whom Allah had given money but no knowledge, and who spends it randomly without any plan, fearing not his Rabb, visiting no relatives and knowing not Allah's right in that, and this is the worst position. The fourth man is the one to whom Allah has given neither money nor knowledge, and who says: "If I have money, I will do as (the third man) does, so with his intention alone he will have equal sins to the third man." (Narrated by Ahmad and At-Tirmidhi)

Dear brother/sister,
It suffices of the life of this world that it is a farm that is harvested in the Hereafter, a (season) of worship and a time of obedience, in which we prepare our provisions for the Hereafter.

Al-Fudayl, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "The All-Mighty Allah made all the evils in a house and made the love of the life of this world the key of that house. And He made all the good in a house and made renunciation of the worldly pleasures the key of that house."

Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said: "The life of this world is a house of deeds and the Hereafter is a house of horrors. Man remains between deeds and horrors until he settles either in Paradise or in Hell."

Dear brother/sister in Islam,
Careful thinking leads man to realise that this life is a journey for which he has to prepare his baggage. He also knows that the journey starts from the backbones of fathers, to the wombs of mothers and to life, then to the grave and Resurrection and finally to the eternal abode. We are captives in this life and we have to do our best to release ourselves from captivity, then proceed rapidly to reach our original home. It should be known that the part of the journey that is during life is very short and passes without being noticed, like someone who is on board a ship and cannot feel how fast it is running.

It is evident that man during any journey needs provisions and the only useful provision for the Hereafter is piety. Man therefore should have patience and tolerate the bitterness of piety lest he may say during the journey: "O my Rabb! Return me back to life," then the definite answer is "No" Every one who is unmindful should mind his slow pace. The All-Mighty Allah shows man during this journey great signs to make him fear Allah in order that he may not be diverted from the right path and the perfect method. Whoever diverts from the right path should return to Allah in repentance and ask forgiveness of him.

Al-Rabi' Ibn Al-Haytham was asked about life. A man said to him: "How are you today?" He said: "We are today weak and sinful people, eating our livelihoods and waiting for death."

Dear brother/sister,
Whoever prepares himself for the meeting with Allah (), makes use of his time in what will be of benefit to him in the Hereafter, will be happy when neither wealth nor children will avail, when the written pages of deeds will be laid open, the hearts will shake and people will look as if drunken, though they are not drunk but the Torment of Allah will be severe.

A poet said: "If the soul diverts from the truth, we rebuke it, and if it inclines towards the life of this world and rejects the Hereafter, we forbid it. It deceives us and we deceive it but we overcome it by patience."

Whoever desires the life of this world for worldly pleasures only, will see it abandoning him at his last critical moments. And whoever desires this life as a means to the Hereafter and to Paradise that is as wide as the heavens and the earth, will be led to the Home of Peace with Allah's Mercy.

The pious people are human beings like us all, they love the life of this world and its pleasure, but the difference is that they are

convinced that this life is a temporary one and preferred the eternal life. For this reason the All-Mighty Allah paved the way for them and removed the obstacles there from.

A man said to Al-Fudayl Ibn `Ayyad: "How are you?" And he replied: "If you are asking about the life of this world, it has diverted us from the right path and sent us in many directions."

And if you are asking about the Hereafter, then how is he whose sins multiplied, whose deeds became weak, whose life-span was over, who prepared no provisions for the Hereafter, and did not prepare himself for death.

In our days when a man needs any item of the worldly pleasures, however mean it is, he spends great effort and time examining and screening the various famous marks to assure perfect function. But when this man goes into a mosque to perform prayer, it is really a pity: Kneeling and prostrating imperfectly, and with neither solemnity nor submissiveness.

Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said: "O man! You seek this life as an imperious need for you, whereas you seek the Hereafter as if you are in no need of it. However, the All-Mighty Allah has spared you the efforts as regards to your needs in the life of this world, and if you seek the Hereafter, then you will obtain it, so take your decision."

Dear brother/sister,
It is astonishing that a man who believes in the Home of Eternity, turns away from it and seeks this life of trifles. But when Allah loves a man, He protects him from the life of this world. It is narrated that the Prophet (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) said: **"Verily, the All-Mighty Allah has created noting that is more detestable to Him than to life of this world, and He has never looked at it since its creation."**

Shumait Ibn `Ajlan used to say: "Two persons are tormented in the life of this world: a rich man who is given a great wealth

that keeps him so busy with worldly pleasures, and a poor man who is deprived of such pleasures for which he is longing with a heartbreak."
A man dispraised the life of this world in the presence of 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (radiyallahu anhu) who said: "The life of this world is a home of truth for the one who is truthful in it, a home of safety for the one who understands it perfectly, and a home of richness for the one who prepares his provisions there from."
Many people dispraise the life of this world and consider it the main reason of distraction from obedience, however, it is the passage to Paradise and it is the deeds performed during one's life-time that take one to either Paradise or Hell.

Al-Awza'i admonished the people saying: "Make yourselves strong with these graces in which you are in order to escape from Allah's kindled fire which leaps up over the hearts. You are in a home where your stay is so short. You are the successors of the nations who have lived before you, and who have enjoyed the splendour of life. They were of stronger bodies and lived longer periods than you, heaving rocks for their dwellings and doing many difficult tasks that you are too weak to do, nevertheless, the passing of days and nights rolled up their epoch, their villages were destroyed and their traces were effaced, so you can neither find a single one of them nor hear even a whisper of them."

Dear brother/sister,
Desiring the Hereafter and renouncing the life of this world can be perfected only by:

1- A thorough consideration of the life of this world and how rapidly it decreases and perishes, and to become aware of the pain, distress and vexation suffered in competing for its pleasures which will soon disappear leaving behind regret and heartbreak. The one who seeks worldly pleasures is always concerned when they are out of his reach, and if he obtains them, then he is in sorrow, when they disappear.

2- A thorough consideration of the Hereafter and how inevitable and lasting it is, to be aware of its bliss and happiness and to note the great variation between that and the worldly temporal pleasures. The All-Mighty Allah says:
“...The Hereafter is better and more lasting.) (Qur'an 87:17)

Everything is false except Allah (), and every bliss will vanish except that of Paradise. May Allah make us of the dwellers of Paradise.

Dear brother/sister in Islam,
Fakhruddawlah 'Ali Ibn Rukn (king from Bani Buwaih) said: "I collected for my sons and their soldiers a wealth that will suffice them for fifteen years."

This king died in a castle in Ar-Ri, the keys of which were with one of his sons who was not there at the time of the father's death, so no shroud was found for him. The people took money from the person in charge of the mosque, bought a shroud and wrapped the king therein. A fight started for power and the soldiers were too busy to bury him until he decomposed, and nobody could come close to his cadaver, which was then tied with a rope and pulled down the stairs cut into pieces. This king left two million Dinars (coins), large quantities of gold, diamonds and pearls, furniture, household effects and arms."

Al-Hasan said: "How good is life in this world for a believer because he uses it to prepare his provisions for Paradise. And how evil it is for a disbeliever who uses it to prepare his provisions for Hell."

A poet said: "O you who have enjoyed the splendour of life in this world keeping the eyes always open for its pleasure, you have lost your life-span seeking what you can never attain, so what are you going to say to Allah when you meet Him."

Al-Hasan said: "In the life of this world the believer is like a captive, doing his best to free himself, and not feeling any security until he meets the All-Mighty Allah."

Ibn Mas'ud said: "In the life of this world, everyone is a guest and his wealth is a loan. The guest will part and the loan will be returned."

Salamah Ibn Dinar said: "The goods of the Hereafter are a dead stock now, you should buy as much as you can of them because on the day when they are saleable you can't have anything of them."

On the Day of Resurrection there is going to be only recompense and reckoning. When the sun of the Hereafter rises there is going to be only reckoning but no deeds, and now here in the life of this world there are only deeds but no reckoning. We should therefore make use of our life-span, before it is over, to perform good deeds and to prepare ourselves for the reckoning before we are asked about it.

As regards renunciation of worldly pleasures, our forefathers were far more better than us. They gave no importance to its splendour and pleasures. `Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (radiyallahu anhu) used to ascend the mimbar to deliver a sermon while he was wearing a dress on which there were twelve patches. In our days some people will not go to the mosque if their dresses are torn and so they miss the congregational prayer. Others abandon going to the mosque for very weak excuses and even without any.

Jesus said to his disciples: "Cross the life of this world and don't construct it. And is there any sensible man who builds a house on the sea waves? That is the life of this world, so don't take it as a home of settlement."

Mashriq Ibn Al-Ajda took his cousin by the hand to a garbage dump and said to him: "This is the life of this world. The people

ate its food and consumed it, put on dresses and wore them out, shed blood in it, regarded the interdictions as permissible and severed the bonds of kinship."

Describing the pious people, Al-Hasan said: "May Allah have mercy on those who considered the life of this world as a trust, gave it back to the one who deposited it with them then left so light."

A man wrote to a friend of his: "Life in this world is a dream and the Hereafter is wakefulness and in between there is death."

Dear brother/sister, look to the years that passed away of your life-span and see how rapidly they have gone with their happiness, sorrow, sweetness and bitterness, but reckoning is yet to come.

A poet said: "O you who love the pleasures of this world, don't feel happy for that, because life is so rapidly changing and that is obvious to all people. How many a man who drank honey that caused his death, and how many a man who girded himself with a sword then killed with it."

Narrated Dirar Ibn Murrah: Satan (Iblis) said: "If I am successful in persuading man to do three things, then that will be all I need: to make forget his sins. to regard his good deeds as too many and to be proud of his opinion."

One of our forefathers said: "Beware of the life of this world because its magic is more effective than that of Harut and Marut. The two latter's separate a man from his wife whereas the life of this world separates a man from his Rabb."

A poet said: "Life surrenders to the one who seeks it, but the clever one who renounces its pleasures feels more comforts. Every king who possessed and enjoyed its splendour went out

of it with a shroud only. Such persons collect wealth then leave it behind which is a trial in both cases."

Abu Darda', said: "Everyone has an imperfection of knowledge and wisdom, if his wealth increases, he becomes so happy though day and night are working hard on destroying his life-span. So what is good of a wealth that increases and a life-span that decreases."

Many people become so depressed and distressed when they miss any of the worldly pleasures, but very few feel the same about their life-time that passes away rapidly.

Al-Hasan said: "The one whose wealth increases, his sins increase likewise, and who talks much, lies much, and the ill-tempered man torments himself."

Dear brother/sister,
We collect money to attain happiness, build palaces to make cordiality reside in our hearts, travel to forget our sorrow and spend all we have for the sake of happiness, but is that happiness?

Many people have attempted all these ways before us and they all agree with us that the real happiness is to obey Allah be close to Him and to make one's efforts for the happiness that has no distress in it and a bliss that is lasting.

Wahb Ibn Manbah said: "The similitude of the life of this world and the Hereafter is that of two co-wives (of polygamy) whenever you please one, you anger the other."

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: "I am astonished about those people who are ordered to prepare their provisions, then the start of the journey is announced, however they remain unmindful in their vain discussions and fruitless deeds."

Dear brother/sister in Islam,

What is the standard in this life? And how are things weighed?
'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (radiyallahu anhu) said: "Good does not mean to have big wealth and many children, but to have many good-deeds and much clemency. There is no good in the life of this world but for two men: a man who has committed so many evil deeds and who had turned to Allah in repentance and a man who hastens to perform good works."

A poet said: "I wonder for a man who buys aberration paying guidance as a price, and I wonder more about that man who buys the life of this world paying as a price his religion. But the one who is the most surprising and most unsuccessful is the one who sells his religion receiving as a price the worldly pleasures of others."

Dear brother/sister,
You should know that the life of this world is like a dream or a transient shade. If it causes someone to laugh a little, it will make him weep a lot. If it causes pleasures for days or weeks, it will cause sorrow for months and years. If it allows its pleasures to people for a short time, it will deprive them of that for a long time.

Hind, the daughter of Nu'man, said: "We were once the most honourable people with the strongest power and all the Arabs needed our help. Now we are the lowest people and all the Arabs pity us."

`Umar Ibn Abdul `Aziz said in a sermon: "O people! You are created to last, but you will be moved from one home to another. You are in the home of choking food and drinks, and you will not enjoy a comfort that pleases you unless you abandon others that you hate to abandon. You must, therefore, work hard to prepare your home of eternity."

A poet said: "If you have obtained the pleasures of the life of this world in addition to a good-looking face and virtue, beware lest you wish on the Day of Resurrection that you were dust."

Al-Hasan said: "I swear by Him in whose Hands my life is, I know some people for whom the life of this world is lower than the dust they walk on." May Allah have mercy on Al-Hasan, he said so about his time, but what would have he said if he had witnessed our time? People chasing worldly pleasures, severing the bonds of kinship and wasting their time talking about the wealth of this person and the properties of the other. In their meeting they neither remember Allah nor abstain from back-biting and other illegal conducts. They do not remember the narrow dark grave and the horrors that will come.
Al-Hasan said: "How astonishing is the one who laughs whereas he is sure about Hell, and the one who feels happy whereas he is sure about death."

A poet said: "Nights and events pass like dreams whereas we are sleeping. But the most astonishing is that every hour the pace is increasing while we are sitting idle (doing nothing that will be of use in the real life.)"

Should we ever work for the sake of this life? The answer to this question is `Yes.' Islam is a religion that urges people to work - but the following advice must be taken into consideration: A man came to Sufyan Ath-Thawri seeking his advice, and he said to the man: "Work for the sake of this life within the extent of your stay in it, and for the Hereafter within the extent of your stay therein."

We should therefore compare the period of stay in the life of this world and that in the Hereafter. The life span of the people of the nation of the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam) ranges between sixty and seventy years (some people may die earlier). But let us see how long will be the day in the Hereafter, the All-Mighty Allah says:
(...And verily, a day with your Rabb is as a thousand years of what you reckon.) (Qur'an 22:47)

Dear brother/sister,

The measure is very clear and the difference is obvious: one day in the Hereafter equals one thousand years in the life of this world, and one has to work for the purpose of both the life of this world and the Hereafter, but each with the importance it deserves. May Allah make us successful in His obedience, lead us by His Mercy to the Gardens of Paradise and give us of His Guidance that, which will allow us to attain His Good Pleasure.

Dear brother/sister,
If a man desires to know how important he is in the eyes of a king, he should look into the work he is doing for the sake of that king.

We should look, dear brother/sister, to our station with Allah and what we are doing for His sake. If we are doing our utmost for His worship and obedience, then that will make us safe, and if otherwise, we should return to Allah in repentance, ask His Forgiveness and be shy of Him, our Sustainer and Creator.

Shaddad Ibn `Amr said: "The Hereafter is a true promise where a powerful king will judge between the people. The life of this world is full of vanities that are available for both the pious and the sinner. There is no plea for him who hears and disobeys, and no plea against him who hears and obeys. Don't take the life of this world as a valuable thing because it spares none, and don't reject it because the Hereafter can be obtained only through the life of this world."

`Ubaid Ibn `Umair said: "Whoever has a great wealth will have a severe reckoning, and whoever has numerous followers will have an equal number of Satans, and whoever is close to a ruler is remote from Allah."

Dear brother/sister,
The All-Mighty Allah has made the life of this world temporary vanities and passing enjoyment, whereas He made the Hereafter an abode of recompense and reward. The life of this world was encircled with pleasures, the All-Mighty Allah says:

(Beautified for men is the love of things they covet; women, children, much of gold and silver [wealth], branded beautiful horses, cattle and well-tilled land. This is the pleasure of the present world's life; but Allah has the excellent return [Paradise with flowing rivers] with Him.) (Qur'an 3:14)

In this Qur'anic Verse the All-Mighty Allah states that the beauties and pleasures of the life of this world are: women, the greatest of life's pleasures and the most important of its trials; the children who are the perfection of man's pride and honour; wealth and properties, horses, used by men in their travels and in their fights; and land which produces their food (i.e. vegetable, fruits ---etc)

Then the All-Mighty Allah adds that all these pleasures are passing and that in the Hereafter there are better and more lasting pleasures, He says:
(Say: "Shall I inform you of things far better than those? For Al- Muttaqun [the pious] there are Gardens [Paradise] with their Rabb, underneath which rivers flow. Therein [is their] eternal [home] and Azwajun Mutahhratun [purified mates or wives]. And Allah will be pleased with them. And Allah is All-Seer of [His] slaves.) (Qur'an 3:15)

Then Allah states that category of men for whom these eternal pleasures are reserved, He says: **(Those who say: "Our Rabb! We have indeed believed, so forgive us our sins and save us from the punishment of the Fire." [They are] those who are patient, those who are true [in Faith, words, and deeds], and obedient with sincere devotion in worship to Allah. Those who spend [give the Zakat and alms in the Way of Allah] and those who pray and beg Allah's Pardon in the last hours of the night.)** (Qur'an 3: 16,17)

`Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (radiyallahu anhu) wrote to Abu Musa: "You will never obtain the reward in the Hereafter by a means that is better than abandoning the pleasures of the life of this world."

Abu Hazim said: "If a man enters Paradise only by abandoning all that he loves of this life, that would have been a low price, however, he can enter Paradise by abandoning only a thousandth of what he loves of the life of this world."

Al-Fudayl Ibn `Ayyad said: "Man's fear of Allah is equal to his knowledge of Him and his renunciation of worldly pleasures is equal to his desire in the Hereafter."

Al-Hasan said: "The people who will have the easiest reckoning on the Day of Resurrection are those who have done the reckoning of themselves in the life of this world, who have considered well their deeds and intentions, completed what is for Allah's sake and abstained from what is not. And the reckoning will be heavy for those who jeopardise their religious duties in the life of this world and make no reckoning of themselves, because they will discover that the All-Mighty Allah has recorded even the weight of an atom of their deeds, the All-Mighty Allah says:
(...They will say: "Woe to us! What sort of Book is this that leaves neither a small thing nor a big thing, but has recorded it with numbers!" And they will find all that they did, placed before them, and your Rabb treats no one with injustice.) (Qur' an 18:49)

Whoever contemplates the farm of the life of this world and the time of harvest, sees that it is a serious matter and not an amusement. What a man forwards today will find tomorrow, on a Day when every nursing mother will forget her suckling, and every pregnant one will drop her load.

Salman Ibn Dinar said: "What you love to have with you in the Hereafter you should advance today, and what you hate to have with you, you should abandon today."

Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said: "Night is so long therefore don't shorten it with sleep, and day is so pure therefore don't soil it with your sins."

Shumail Ibn `Ajlan said: "Whoever considers death before his eyes, does not bother whether he lives in luxury or in hardship."

A poet said: "O you unmindful man! Whereas time is a lesson for you, if you are asleep, remember that time is awake."

Muhammad Ibn Sugah said: "There are two deeds if we are tormented only for them then we will be deserving that torment: a man receives a worldly benefit and becomes so happy and Allah knows that the man has never expressed such happiness for performing an obedience or attaining a religious benefit; and a man loses a worldly benefit and becomes so sorry for that, however Allah knows that he has never expressed such sorrow for committing an evil deed or missing a religious duty."

Muhammad Ibn Wasi` said: "Is it not astonishing to see someone weeping in Paradise?" The people answered: "Yes" He added: "It is more astonishing to see someone laughing in the life of this world whereas he doesn't know his destiny."

A poet said: "Take your provisions from this life because you don't know when night comes whether you will live till dawn or not. How many young men that was laughing during the day whereas his shroud was being prepared and he knew nothing about it. How many young child whose parents hoped to see an old man but was already sent to the graves. And how many a brides that was beautified for their bride-grooms, but death took them both on the night of their wedding."

The life of this world is a home of wishes and pride, so you should beware of it. Its wishes are untrue, its hopes are false and its felicity is vexation, so you are in a danger. The life of this world is either a passing bounty, a coming affliction, a painful disaster or an inevitable death.

Abu Hurairah (radiyallahu anhu) said: "You are not true to yourselves: you hope for things that you don't attain, you collect wealth that you don't spend and you build houses where you will not live."

A poet said: "Don't seek anything other than contentment, because therein is the bliss and the comfort of your body. Then consider the case of a person who possesses the whole world, can he take with him in the grave more than cotton and a shroud?"

Abu Muhriz At-Tafawi said: While I was a young man I complained about distress to a slave-woman who said: "O my son! Seek help in the honour of satisfaction and not in the humiliation of pursuits. I see in many cases that few are safe." He added: "I still benefit from that advice as regards satisfaction."

Shu'aib Ibn Harb said: "Whoever seeks the life of this world should prepare himself for humiliation."

And whoever prepares for humiliation sets free his desires, legal and illegal becomes equal for him, he earns for material benefits and worldly pleasures."

Dear brother/sister,
The All-Mighty Allah has made the Hereafter a home of recompense and reward and the life of this world a home of tolerance, trouble and preparation. And preparation in the life of this world is not limited to the Hereafter but includes this life

as well because this life is a farm that is harvested in the Hereafter.

Yahyd Ibn Mu'Adh said: "It is difficult to renounce the life of this world and it is even more difficult to renounce Paradise, but the dowry of Paradise is the renunciation of the life of this world." Dear brother/sister, Have we paid this dowry?

We are unmindful, and busy with the worldly amusement, though we know that every happiness is followed by sorrow and every bliss is followed by vexation.

An early scholar said: "O man! You are in need of your share of the life of this world, and your need is greater for your share of the Hereafter. If you start with your share of the life of this world, then you will lose your share of the Hereafter and even jeopardise your share of this life. And if you start with your share of the Hereafter, then you will get your share of the life of this world as well."

A poet said: "How can he live happily, the one who knows that the Rabb of the creation will question him, then punishes him for wronging others and rewards him for the good deeds he had performed."

Al-Hasan Al-Basri wrote to `Umar Ibn Abdul `Aziz: "The life of this world is a temporary home and not a permanent one. Adam (M) was sent down to this life as a punishment for him, so beware of it. The best provision to take from this life is to renounce it, and the best of its riches is poverty in it. It humiliates the man who honours it and impoverishes the man who collects its benefits. It is like poison eaten by someone who ignores it, then it causes his death. You should therefore be like someone who cures an injury, he has patience in taking medicine lest his injury may take a long time to heal. Beware of this life which is arrogant and deceptive. It appears like a beautiful bride towards whom the eyes turn and the hearts show passionate love, then kills whoever marries her. A man

may get what he wants of this life's pleasures, keeps himself busy with that and forgets the Hereafter till he stumbles off. He will then feel sorrow and regret and leave it without preparing any provision for the Hereafter.

The life of this world was presented to the Prophet Muhammad with all its treasures but he rejected it. He hated to love what his Creator has hated and to honoured what Allah humiliated. Allah has taken away the pleasures of this life from the pious men to test them and gave plenty of that to his enemies to mislead them. It is narrated that the All-Mighty Allah said to Moses (alaihis salam): "When you see riches coming towards you, say: This is a hastened punishment for a sin," and if you see poverty coming towards you say: "Welcome, the motto of the pious."

Dear brother/sister,
Life is being rolled up before you and the sun of the Hereafter is about to rise, so how do you see that?

When Salman was dying, he wept and the people asked: "Why do you weep?" You are the Companion of the Prophet. He replied: "I don't weep desiring this life or regretting departure therefrom, but Allah's Messenger has commanded us and we disobeyed him." He said that: "The man from among us should have provisions in this life just like that of a traveller, only enough for his journey." When Salman died the people discovered that the value of all the property he left behind, did not exceed thirty Dirhams (coins).

Life is a dark night and an extended mirage, and can be limited only by renunciation, satisfaction and contentment with what Allah has given, and by spending the days and nights in Allah's obedience.

Malik Ibn Dinar said: "The people who love the life of this world have left it without tasting the best thing therein." He was

asked: "What is that?" He answered: "Knowledge of the All-Mighty Allah

Abu Darda' said: "Had it not been for three things, I would have preferred to be under the earth:

1- Brothers and friends visiting me and choosing fruitful speech.
2- To cover my face with dust in prostration to Allah.
3- To go out for Allah's Sake."

Dear brother/sister,
If you contemplate well the life of this world, you will see that it is three days; a day that has passed and for which you don't hope, a day that you live and that you should make the utmost benefit thereof, and a day that is yet to come and that you are not sure whether you are going to live or die before it. In this life you should seek the Hereafter, because out of this life you are going to have nothing but what you have sent for yourself beforehand. Therefore, you should not keep your wealth for yourself and follow what you will leave behind.

About the one who seeks the pleasures of the life of this world, Al-Hasan said: "I swear by Allah they will not last for him nor will he last in this life. He will not be safe from its evils, burden and reckoning, then he will be taken out of it in a shroud."

'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (radiyallahu anhu) wrote to Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas (radiyallahu anhu): "Man feels unhappy for missing what he can never have and happy for what he can never miss. So be happy for what you have gained of the benefits of the Hereafter and sorry for what you have missed of that. Don't feel happy for what you have obtained of the worldly benefit and be concerned about what will come after death."
A poet said: "A man who seeks the pleasures of the life of this world whatever his life span is, and however great are the pleasures and benefits he has achieved, is like someone who has built a house that collapsed at the moment of completion."

Dear brother/sister, Man should be worried about the following five points:-

1- The past sins about which he is not sure whether they have been forgiven by Allah or not.
2- The good deeds whether they have been accepted or not.
3- He knows how his life has been spent up to date but should be concerned about the future.
4- He knows that Allah prepared two dwellings in the Hereafter and he is not sure that in which one he is going to be (Paradise or Hell).
5- He does not know whether Allah is pleased or displeased with him.

Whoever is concerned about these five points in his life, has a strong reason not to laugh.

At-Taimi said: "The difference between you and the pious people is that when the pleasures of this life came towards them they fled from them, whereas you follow them when they turn away from you."

A poet said: "Have you not heard the news of the old generations and what time has done to them. If you don't know, these are their homes already effaced by the rain and wind. They have all passed through this stage and all the coming generations will do the same till the Day of Resurrection. Therefore, you should wake up from your unmindfulness because that Day is so close now. If you refuse to wake now, then you will wake when your cover is removed (after death); you will remember my advice, but it will be too late."

Abil Dharr Al-Ghifari stood up near the Ka'bah and said: "O people! Come to a brother who is going to advice you." When the people came towards him he continued: "If any of you intends to set out for a journey won't he take the required provisions to assist him to reach his destination?" They

answered "Yes" He added: " The Day of Resurrection is the most remote destination for your journey, you should therefore, take what will be good for you" They asked: "What will be good for us?" He answered: "Perform Haj j (Pilgrimage) for the horrors of the Hereafter, observe fasting on a very hot day for the long Day of Resurrection, and perform prayer in the darkness of the night for the loneliness of the grave. Say a good word or keep a bad one, give charity to the poor. Make your life, of two sessions; one to perform good deeds seeking the Hereafter and the other to have legal gains to spend on your family and to send beforehand for yourself in the Hereafter."

Dear brother/sister,
In a clear contrast between ourselves and our forefathers Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: "I knew some people and some sects who did not feel happy when they would obtain any of the worldly pleasures, or to follow them when they would turn away. The life of this world has been for them lower than the dust they walk on. They spent their nights praying, weeping and supplicating Allah (). When they would perform a good deed, they used to praise Allah for that and to invoke Him to accept it, and when they would commit an evil deed they used to ask Allah to forgive them. I swear by Allah they were saved from sins only by Allah's forgiveness, May Allah have mercy on them."

Dear brother/sister,
The poet said: "You accumulate your sins one above the other and covet, inspite of that, to have the reward of a good worshipper and enter Paradise! Don't you know that Adam (alaihis salam) was sent out of it because of a single sin he committed."

Abu Darda' (radiyallahu anhu) said: "I love poverty so as to be modest before my Rabb, I love death because I am longing to see the All-Mighty Allah and I love sickness so as to expiate my sins."

A poet said: "People are covetous in this life, though its happiness is mixed with vexation. Their sustenance was not given to them because of their intelligence, but this is what Allah has decided beforehand. How many wise scholars who are poor, and how many fools who live in luxury inspite of their dereliction. Had it been a matter of force, falcons would have snatched away the sustenance of sparrows."

The life of this world, however low and mean it is, remains the passage to one of the dwellings of the Hereafter: Paradise or Hell.

Allah's Messenger said:
"The reckoning was done for a man from the past nations but there were no good deeds in his records." That man was so rich during his life and used to mix with the people and to order his subordinates to be kind to the needy. The All-Mighty Allah said to the angels: "We are more deserving of that than him, We forgive him." (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim)

Al-Shaft'e said: "The greatest of deeds are three: "To give generously out of the few that you have, to be devoted to Allah in loneliness and to say the truth in the face of someone who is hoped and feared."

Dear brother/sister,
You are a traveller in the life of this world, but one day your journey will have an end and you will have to step down.

A poet said: "If you do not take in your journey in this life the provisions of piety, and if you meet after death someone who has done so; then you will regret for not having been like him and for not having deposited any balance in your account for that day."

Dear brother/sister,

How astonishing is he who knows that death is true, then laughs! Who knows that Hell is true, then feels happy and who knows that preordainment is true then worries about his sustenance.

Abn Bakr Al-Marath said: "I visited Ahmad Ibn Hanbal" one morning and said to him: "How are you?" He answered: "How is he the one whose Rabb requires to perform his duties, whose Prophet requires to flow the Sunnah (Prophetic traditions), the two angels require that he rectifies his deeds, his human self requires him to follow its desires, Satan requires him to commit evil deeds, the angel of death requires him to give his life and his children require him to satisfy their needs."

A wise man said: "Whoever alleges that he hates the life of this world is a liar until he proves truthful and if he proves so, then he is a mad man."

The one who follows the pleasures of this life can never hate it, and the one who seeks the Hereafter does not hate this life because it is the place of work and the farm that is cultivated here but harvested in the Hereafter.
Another wise man said: "How can he feel happy the one whose day demolishes his month (gradually) and whose month demolishes his year and whose year demolishes his life span. How can he feel happy the one whose life-span leads to death."

Paradise and another will be in the lowest bottom in Hell. Death is the only delay between man and any of the mentioned stations.

The believer's resolution is attached to the Hereafter and everything in the life of this world reminds him therewith. We see, for instance, when a group of craftsmen enter in a house each of them focuses on the part that constitutes his specialisation; a carpenter looks at the doors and windows, a mason looks at the walls and a draper looks at the sheets and cloth. When a believer sees darkness he remembers the

darkness of the grave, when he sees a painful sight he remembers Allah's torment, when he sees sleeping people he remembers dead people in their graves and when he sees pleasures he remembers Paradise.

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (radiyallahu anhu) said: "O people! You are in the passage of day and night. Your life span is decreasing. Your deeds are kept and death comes suddenly. Everyone will harvest what he has sown. A covetous man cannot get what Allah has not predestined for him. Whoever is given good that is from Allah, and whoever is saved against evil, then Allah is his Protector. The pious people are masters, jurists are leaders and being in the company of such people is a benefit."

Abu Darda' (radiyallahu anhu) said: "Before Islam I used to be a merchant, and after the advent of Islam I was busy with commerce and worship, but it was so difficult for me to combine the two, that I renounced commerce and turned towards worship."

This does not mean that man should absolutely abandon working for his sustenance, but that the pleasures of this life should not be his main objective. Islam urges man to work and considers that a holy activity if the intention is sincere and the person is loyal.

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (radiyallahu anhu) said: "Whoever seeks the life of this world damages his rewards in the Hereafter, and whoever seeks rewards in the Hereafter, damages the pleasures of this life. You should therefore damage this transient life for the sake of the permanent one."

The life of this world has a big share in ourselves. We talk only about its pleasures and feel sorry for what we miss thereof. Even the social relations are now governed by material benefits. One of my neighbours was a high official who used to have many visitors. One evening I saw that man sitting in the

middle of his garden with the door of his house wide-open but there wasn't even a single person with him. When I asked about the matter, I was told that the man had retired from the service that is why his visitors had disappeared because he could no longer offer his services.

A wise man said: "We seek four ends but we take the wrong ways: We seek riches in money whereas it is in contentment, we seek comfort in plenitude whereas it is in fewness, we seek dignity in the people whereas it is in piety, we seek pleasures in food and dresses whereas it is in Islam."

Al-Khurassani said: "I don't advise you to mind your life's affairs because I know that you are covetous to do so, but I advise you to mind the affairs of the Hereafter. Take from this temporary home to the eternal one. Consider this life as something that you have left, I swear by Allah you will leave it. Consider death as something that you have tasted, I swear by Allah you will taste it. And consider the Hereafter as a home that you have visited, I swear by Allah you will be there."

Al-Balakhl said: "The people say that they are Allah's slaves whereas they deal with him as free men, they say that Allah guarantees their sustenance but their hearts are fond of collecting worldly benefits, they say that death is inevitable but they behave as if they are not going to die. So their acts are contradictory to what they say."

Ibrahim Al-Taymi said: "I imagined myself in Paradise, eating of its fruits, drinking of its beverages and embracing my young beautiful wives." Then I imagined myself in Hell, eating of its poisonous plants, drinking boiling water and wrestling in my chains. I said to myself: "Which of the two do you prefer?" The answer was: "I want to go back to life to perform good deeds," I said: "You can do so, because that is just an imagination."

Salamah Ibn Dinar said: "Allah's Grace in what He has deprived me of is greater than that in what He has given me, because I

see that the latter was given to other people and they are destroyed."

Zunnan Al-Misr said: "The ailment of the body is in sickness and that of the heart is in sins. A delicious meal can-not benefit the body when the person is sick and likewise, the heart can-not taste the sweetness of worship if it is full of sins."

A man came to Mu'fidh Ibn Jabal seeking his advice and he said to him: "Observe fasting, then break it, perform prayer during the night then sleep, gain your sustenance legally, beware of the imprecation of a grieved person and die as a Muslim."

Salman Al-Farsi said: "Three things astonished me till I laughed and three things caused my sorrow till I wept. The first three are: a man who seeks worldly pleasures whereas death seeks him, a man who is unmindful towards Allah's duty whereas Allah is not unmindful towards him and a man who laughs loudly whereas he does not know whether Allah is pleased or angry with him. And the second three are: being separated from Muhammad (2ft), being separated from my loved ones and being judged by Allah on the Day of Resurrection and not knowing whether I will be ordered to Paradise or to Hell."

The love of the life of this world became deep in our hearts. Day and night we are busy thinking about its pleasures and how to maximise our profits and multiply our gains. Whenever there is an appointment for a worldly matter the people go there so early and wait happily for the start. But when the call for prayer is made they are too lazy to go to the mosques and some of them do not even answer the call.

Said Ibn 'Abdul `Aziz said: "Whoever does good can wait for reward and whoever does wrong should not be surprised when tormented. Whoever avails of dignity without right inherits humiliation with right and whoever collects a wealth by wronging others Allah will impoverish him with justice."

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: "The jurisprudent is the one who renounces worldly pleasures, seeks the Hereafter, knows well his religion, worships his Rabb regularly, protects the Muslim's honour, saves their wealth and advises them."

Collecting worldly pleasures is not an indicator of happiness. Many poor people (only with contentment in their hearts) are happier than very rich people.

Dear brother/sister,
The good Muslim should always remember Paradise and Hell, wish for the former and flee from the latter, otherwise his resolution will become weak. The harder the Muslim works seeking Paradise, the stronger becomes his resolution and the more perfect become his deeds.

Abdullah Ibn Khabig said: "Don't feel sorry except for what will harm you tomorrow and don't feel happy except for what will please you tomorrow. The best fear is that which makes you abstain from disobedience, feel sorry for the good deeds you have missed and be thoughtful the rest of your life."

Dear brother/sister,
Coming to life and enjoying its pleasures is so easy but to leave it is so painful. The stupor of death is coming to end happiness in this world and what is coming after death is even more horrible.

A poet said: "Nights and days are pregnant, but Allah Alone knows what they are going to bring out at delivery."

Sufyan Ath-Thawri said: "The following three are those who will be of utmost regret on the Day of Resurrection:

(1) A man who used to have a slave in the life of this world and whose deeds are better than those of the master.
(2) A man who had wealth in this life but did not pay Zakah, after his death his heirs took the wealth and paid Zakah.

(3) A scholar who made no use of his knowledge but taught another who profited a lot from that."

Dear brother/sister,
May Allah make our way in the life of this world lead to the Gardens of Aden, and make us of those who prepare their provisions from this transient abode for the eternal one.
I invoke the All-Mighty Allah to assemble me, you, our fathers, mothers and relatives under His Mercy with those on whom there shall be no fear nor shall they grieve Amm.

Conclusion

The All-Mighty Allah says: **(And put forward to them the example of the life of this world: it is like the water [rain] which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it, and becomes fresh and green. But [later] it becomes dry and broken pieces, which the winds scatter. And Allah is Able to do everything.)** (Qur'an 18:45)